

SEVERE LOCAL STORMS FOR JANUARY 1949

[The table hereunder contains such data as have been received concerning severe local storms that occurred during the month. A revised list will appear in the United States Meteorological Yearbook]

Place	Date	Time	Width of path, yards	Loss of life	Value of property destroyed	Character of storm	Remarks
Idaho.....	1-3					Snow and wind.....	Snowfall throughout State on 1st, ranging up to 10 inches in Fremont County and a foot or more in Shoshone County, followed by strong winds in many sections. Drifting snow blocked highways 1 to 3 days in Fremont, Bingham, Jerome, and Gem Counties, and closed mountain highways in Boise County. Some delay in rail travel also.
Colorado, northeastern portion.	1-6	7 a. m., 2d-4 a. m., 6th.		7		do.....	Severe principally in Weld, Logan, Larimer, Morgan, Washington, and Yuma Counties. Winds reached gale force over most of eastern plains. Heavy snow fell over western areas, but wind velocities were moderate. Snowfall over the eastern portion varied from light to 15 inches. Drifting snow caused most damage and losses. About 3,000 head of cattle and 2,000 sheep perished in Colorado; subsequent losses may double these immediate estimates. Transportation halted in storm area for several days; many cars marooned on highways. Estimate of losses in vicinity of Agate, \$500,000; Fairplay, \$3,500; Fleming, \$15,000; Ovid, \$120,000; Stratton, \$10,000; Windsor, \$150,000. Heavy losses in vicinities of Ault, Grover, Nunn, Pierce, Rockport, and Sterling, and light to moderate losses in many other vicinities; not estimated. Some damage to winter wheat. Loss of life: Ault, 4, Fairplay, 1, and Idalia, 2.
North Dakota, north-central and southeastern portions.	1-31					do.....	Heavy snowfall and high winds; much blowing and drifting of snow. Continuous cold weather after 15th. Highways snow-blocked; many farmers and some towns isolated. Emergency medical care and food supplied by airplane. Much difficulty feeding livestock.
Wyoming.....	2-4			12	\$9,000,000	Blizzard.....	Worst in climatological history of State. All transportation halted; several thousand travelers stranded. Railroads and highways blocked, with drifts 20 to 30 feet high. 12 deaths attributed directly or indirectly to storm. Livestock loss approximately \$9,000,000. Loss in sheep averaged from 3 to 5 percent and cattle 2 to 4 percent.
Montana.....	2-31					do.....	In eastern third of State on 2d, in northeast on 8th, and in parts of entire area east of Divide on 18th. High winds on several dates kept most secondary roads blocked most of time; several main highways closed for periods up to 2 days. Sheep loss 5 percent. Extremely cold weather which persisted throughout month, especially in western half, caused severe water service difficulties in several cities and delayed transportation. Flathead Lake froze over late in January for 3d time since the 1880's.
Nebraska, western and central portions.	2-5					do.....	Worst experienced in State, with reference to force of wind, amount of snow and drifting, and duration of severe conditions. Even worse than storm itself were conditions that followed. Winds redrifted snow over roads many times. Ice mixed with snow made use of ordinary equipment for snow removal limited. Private, county, State, and Federal agencies worked continually for many days. Losses to railroads immense. Livestock losses estimated at 4 percent; this may require revision as reports come in. Relief operations, and opening and reopening of roads requiring expenditures running into the millions. Several lives lost.
South Dakota.....	2-31				1,000,000	Snow and wind.....	Snowfall 7 to 25 inches over State from 2d to 5th. Ninth lowest January temperature average. Winds 50 to 70 m. p. h. from 2d to 5th in western portion were high during entire month, except for brief periods; lesser force in east and northeast. Lighter snows and drifting at intervals during month, with near record low temperature on 21st made a critical situation west of the Missouri River for evacuation of livestock plus undetermined health of those surviving.
Wilson and Neosho Counties, Kans.	3	2 p. m.....	100-200	0	120,000	Tornado.....	Originated 4 miles northeast of Altoona; traveled northeastward, striking town of Vilas; ended a short distance southwest of Petrolia. Path about 15 miles long. 1 person injured. 7 houses destroyed, 13 damaged; 21 other buildings destroyed, 14 damaged. 13 miles of telephone and power lines damaged.
Anderson County, Kans....	3	2:30-3 p. m....	100	0	45,000	do.....	Traveled from near Colony to near Bush City, passing near south edge of Lone Elm. Path about 25 miles long. Damage to rural property. 2 residences demolished; many other farm buildings destroyed, or damaged. Cattle killed. Telephone and power lines blown down.
Caddo, Webster, and Claiborne Parishes, La.	3	2:45-4 p. m....	100-500	1	140,000	do.....	Developed near Dixie and moved northeastward through Webster and Claiborne Parishes into Arkansas, later striking El Dorado and Warren, Ark. It lifted occasionally, striking Sarepta and Gordon (near Haynesville). 7 persons seriously injured at Gordon and 14 at Sarepta. 20 homes and 9 other buildings destroyed; 8 homes and 3 other buildings seriously damaged. Tornado followed closely path taken by Dec. 31, 1947, tornado. Attended by light hail in Haynesville.
Franklin County, Kans.....	3	3-3:30 p. m....	200	0	500	do.....	Vortex cloud first seen high in air about 1 mile southwest of Richter, 6 miles west of Ottawa. Path ended 2 miles northeast of Richter. The long, rope-shaped cloud touched ground occasionally. Damaged barns and other farm buildings.
Columbia, Union, Ouachita, Calhoun, Bradley, Drew, and Lincoln Counties, Ark.	3	3:15-6 p. m....	300-500	57	1,317,920	do.....	Near record high temperatures for January in southern half of State and in northern Louisiana, followed by cold air mass from northwest. 3 separate tornadoes formed and moved northeastward across southern half of State. The first, and most severe, first sighted 10 miles north of Shreveport at 3:15 p. m.; traveled northeastward for 145 miles in 2 3/4 hours. Made numerous contacts with ground. At Hopewell, 8 miles west of El Dorado, 2 persons were killed and 18 injured. It struck the Bradley Lumber Mill and Bradley Employees Community west of Warren, then lifted to drop again on the northeast side of Warren. In Warren area 55 deaths and 400 injuries; 120 homes destroyed, also 72 suffered major damage, 150 minor damage, and 350 slight damage. Tornado last reported near Lincoln-Desha County line at 6 p. m. 2,700 acres of timber damaged in 5 separate contacts. Quick action by relief agencies materially lessened suffering. Damage to business and manufacturing, \$600,000; other property, \$633,500; forests, \$84,420.
Dallas, Cleveland, and Grant Counties, Ark.	3	4-5 p. m.....	100-200	0	15,700	do.....	Struck in Dallas County and traveled about 50 miles northeastward, making occasional contacts. Most damage at Grapevine, where 2 persons severely injured and 4 homes completely destroyed. Several cars and trucks damaged. Property damage, \$14,200; timber, \$1,500.
Hot Springs, Garland, Saline, and Pulaski Counties, Ark.	3	4-5 p. m.....	100-200	0	12,000	do.....	Travelled about 60 miles northeastward. Deflection by hill country probably reduced potential destruction. Damage minor and scattered. First reported northwest of Arkadelphia, and last contact at Pulaski County Penal Farm, near Pinnacle Mountain. Property damage, \$10,000; timber, \$2,000.
Lincoln and Union Parishes, La.	3	near 5 p. m....	50	1	95,000	do.....	Moved northeastward in short path. Choudrant and Downs ville seriously affected. 19 homes and 11 other buildings destroyed; 4 homes and 2 other buildings damaged. 14 persons injured seriously.

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Place	Date	Time	Width of path, yards	Loss of life	Value of property destroyed	Character of storm	Remarks
Nebraska, central and north-east portions.	3		1 100			Ice	Many communities isolated for a few days because of breakage of power and communication lines. Ice $\frac{1}{4}$ to 1 inch thick on wires.
Minnesota, west-central, southwestern, and north-eastern counties.	3-5				75,000	Ice, sleet, snow, and wind.	Many poles and wires down; communication and electric services seriously disrupted. Traffic delayed. Many trees and shrubs damaged. Some schools closed for several days. Thickness of ice on wires varied from $\frac{1}{4}$ to 2 inches; began to form about 3 p. m. of 3d in extreme southwest and remained on wires in some localities until 7th. Heaviest ice formation west and southwest of Willmar. Damage to overhead wire-system caused by unusual weight of ice and high winds; about 420 poles down and about 6,076 wire breaks, resulting in about \$75,000 loss. Heavy snows in west-central, north-central, and northeast. Some telephone wires down near Virginia.
Idaho	7					Drifting snow	Highways blocked, particularly those running north-south, at such widely separated points as Albion, Springfield, Eden, Nezperce, and Forney. Rail travel delayed.
Kansas, southeastern portion.	9-11	Forenoon of 9th to afternoon of 11th.	1 100		1,000,000	Ice and sleet	Especially severe at Parsons, Independence, Columbus, and Pittsburg. Power and telephone lines practically all down in those cities, paralyzing activities. Schools closed; business houses not opened; homes lighted by candles; and some without heat. Service not fully restored for more than a week. Loss to telephone lines, \$380,000; to power lines, \$125,000.
Mount Sterling and vicinity, Ill.	9-12					Ice	Automobile damaged by falling tree limb. Several persons injured by falls on ice.
Quincy and vicinity, Ill.	9-12					do	Telephone and electric power services disrupted by broken lines.
Roodhouse and vicinity, Ill.	9-12					do	Considerable damage to trees, electric and telephone wires.
Pittsfield and vicinity, Ill.	9-12					do	Heavy damage to trees, telephone and power wires. Several injuries due to falls on ice.
Barry and vicinity, Ill.	9-11					do	Telephone and electric lines downed. Several people injured in falls.
Beardstown and vicinity, Ill.	9-12				250,000	do	Telephone and power wires broken. 20 persons injured in falls.
Iowa, southern portion	10	Afternoon and evening.				Ice and sleet	Freezing rain, sleet, and snow covered most of south, ranging up to 3 inches. Highways hazardous. Small damage to telephone and power lines.
New Mexico, southeastern portion.	10-12				500,000	Ice	Freezing rain, principally in Roosevelt and Lea Counties, for several days coated trees, wires, and other exposed objects with ice up to 1 inch or more thick. Many telephone and power lines down; some communities without power, light, or heat for extended periods. Trees in some areas severely damaged.
West Virginia	11-12			2		Snow	3 small boys lost in storm near Davis; 2 dead when found and third in critical condition.
Fulton County, Ohio	13	During night			7,500	Wind	Walls of church, being erected, blown down; minor damage to roofs.
Idaho, south-central portion.	15					Drifting snow	Highways blocked 1 to 2 days in Elmore, Gooding, Lincoln, Jerome, and Twin Falls Counties. Trains delayed.
Waterloo and vicinity, Ill.	17-18	Night				Ice	Wires, poles, and trees damaged.
Beardstown and vicinity, Ill.	17-18				5,000	do	Damage to electric and telephone wires.
Albion and vicinity, Ill.	18					do	Many telephone wires broken by ice.
Sparta and vicinity, Ill.	18					do	Considerable damage to telephone and power wires.
East St. Louis and vicinity, Ill.	18			1	50,000	do	Heavy damage to telephone and electric lines; many poles downed. 1 man killed when his car skidded. Several persons injured in falls.
Quincy and vicinity, Ill.	18					do	Telephone and electric lines broken.
Peoria and vicinity, Ill.	18	Morning				do	Several persons injured in falls; many minor auto accidents.
White Hall and vicinity, Ill.	18	do		1		do	1 man died as a result of a fall on ice; 20 to 25 others injured. Trees badly damaged.
Aurora and vicinity, Ill.	18					do	Many minor auto accidents due to slippery streets.
Orleans Parish, La.	18	2:30 p. m.			6,000	Wind	Line squall with winds briefly up to 50 m. p. h. unroofed portion of Pelican stadium in New Orleans and a roller skating rink with damage to hardwood floors.
Caledonia, Miss.	18	4 p. m.		2	100,000	Tornado	Path apparently very short. 17 persons seriously injured. 8 homes and 14 other buildings, including 2 cotton gins, destroyed; 11 homes and 13 other buildings seriously damaged.
Fort Wayne, Ind.	18				200,000	Wind	Considerable structural damage. 70 m. p. h. gusts.
South Bend, Ind.	18-19	Night			1,000	do	
Ohio	18-19	Evening of 18th, morning of 19th.				do	State-wide, but locally minor damage to roofs, windows, public utility lines, and trees.
Michigan, southeastern portion.	19	Early morning.		1	500,000	do	Southeastern communities suffered property loss when all-time wind velocity records broken. 1 death from falling tree at Flint. A fire burned 3 business places in Mason. Airplanes overturned at various airports. Plate glass windows blown in. Power and communication lines hard hit.
Nebraska, southern portion.	22-23		1 150			Ice	General prostration of service in numerous sections because of damage to power and communication lines.
Iowa	23	Morning				Ice and fog	Freezing rain caused thin coat of clear ice on outdoor objects; in combination with heavy fog, highway and air transportation at standstill for 12 to 24 hours. Some schools closed following day. Several hundred breaks in telephone lines, particularly in west. Wildlife suffered.
Beavertown, Pa.	23					Ice	Considerable damage to trees and limbs.
Iowa	27-28					Ice, sleet, and snow	Early on 27th, 1 to 2 inches of mixed sleet and rain fell south of a line from Council Bluffs to Boone, Waterloo, and Dubuque. Objects covered with rough ice. Later in day, heavy snow and some wind. In northwest, near blizzard conditions. Except in extreme northwest and extreme southeast, 6 to 14 inches of new snow. Highway travel hazardous; most side roads impassable. Many schools closed on 28th.
Nebraska, eastern portion	27		1 200			Heavy snow, with blizzard.	Damage greater in snow-bound sections where crews opening roads and trails to feed supplies and cattle, and to farm houses.
Freeport and vicinity, Ill.	27					Ice	Severe damage to telephone and power lines.
Oregon and vicinity, Ill.	27					do	Considerable damage to trees, telephone and electric lines.
La Harpe and vicinity, Ill.	27					do	Several power lines broken.
Harvard and vicinity, Ill.	27					do	Trees, telephone and electric wires downed by ice.
Wilkes-Barre, Pa.	27	Night				Ice and sleet	Ice felled numerous utility lines. Sleet-laden limbs fell, severing additional wires. Heavy damage to farms and orchards.
Seneca, S. C.	31	During day		1		Freeze	Man frozen.

1 Miles instead of yards.